



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Fish and Wildlife Service

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INTERIOR DEPARTMENT WILDLIFE AGENCY TO HOST HISTORIC INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MIGRATORY BIRDS

The world's four largest countries, Russia, Canada, China and the United States, will meet for the first time to address the conservation needs of migratory birds, the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced today. This quadripartite conference on migratory birds will be hosted at Middlebury College, Vermont, June 13-19, 1992.

More than 50 scientists and wildlife experts have been invited to address such topics as current and future habitat needs; hunting and subsistence harvest; establishment of new refuges; advances in technology monitoring; and effects of contaminants.

"This will be a truly significant gathering," said Michael Hayden, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks. "We will have some of the world's top migratory bird experts focusing on what can be done to conserve and restore this great resource."

The basic goal of the conference is to encourage the conferees to design and implement conservation and recovery strategies for the international migratory bird resources has shared by the four major countries. In addition to participant scientists, observers have been invited from India, Japan, Mexico and Mongolia, as well as from major international bird conservation organizations.

For many years the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service shared management of North American migratory bird populations with the Canadian Wildlife Service. The Service also has conducted extensive migratory bird studies with Russia under the US-USSR Environmental Agreement of 1972, and with the Chinese under the 1986 US-Peoples Republic of China Nature Conservation Protocol.

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Additionally, the Canadian Wildlife Service cooperates in research projects with counterpart agencies in Russia.

"This is an excellent time to build on the past cooperation we have had with these countries and forge even more effective conservation partnerships for the future," said Fish and Wildlife Director John Turner.

While the four countries have interacted successfully within the frameworks of their various bilateral relationships, they have never before come together to examine complementary activities and consider common problems.

It is anticipated the conference will yield not only a published proceedings, but also a list of recommendations similar to a document prepared after a 1990 US-USSR wildlife conference hosted by the Fish and Wildlife Service at Washington and Lee University in Virginia.

That document called for the two nations to establish more extensive habitat corridors for conservation of migratory species, and to increase exchanges of research findings on rare species.